

**20.06.2016 – Today marks World Refugee Day, a day to stand in solidarity with some of the world’s most vulnerable people.**



*Two children having escaped gang violence in El Salvador find a new home in Mexico. Photo: UNHCR.*

Every minute eight people leave their homes and worldly possessions to escape war, famine or persecution. Displaced persons can take many forms. There are refugees who have fled their home due to fears of persecution or death. Asylum seekers can flee their country from fear of political persecution on numerous grounds (political views, sexuality, religion). Internally Displaced Persons are refugees who have not crossed an international border but yet have been forced to flee their homes.

Refugees are among the most vulnerable people in the world. The [United Nations Convention on Refugees from 1951](#)

was a comprehensive framework to aid these unprotected peoples. The Convention safeguards refugees' right to work, housing, education, freedom of religion and much more.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has stated today: "We must stand together with the millions of men, women and children who flee their homes each year, to ensure that their rights and dignity are protected wherever they are, and that solidarity and compassion are at the heart of our collective response."



*Promotional poster for the #WithRefugees campaign. Photo: UN.org*

[World Refugee Day](#) holds special significance for European countries, who are experiencing the biggest influx of refugees since the end of the Second World War. In 2015, over a million people tried to reach Europe (mainly from Syria) by way of either the Balkan corridor or from Libya. Conditions for refugees trying to reach Europe are especially precarious, with 3,700 recorded deaths last year and 2,700 this year.

For World Refugee Day 2016, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has launched the [#WithRefugees](#) petition. The petition asks for governments around the world to “ensure every refugee child gets an education, every refugee family has somewhere safe to live and every refugee can work or learn new skills to make a positive contribution to their community.” The petition will be delivered to the UN headquarters building in New York City on September 19, ahead of the UN General Assembly high-level meeting to discuss large movements of refugees and migrants.

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### Unric’s related links

[World Refugee Day](#)

[#WithRefugees campaign](#)